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## EXCAVATING BURIED TREASURE

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EXCAVATING  
Buried Treasure

by Rufus Graves Mather

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To the dear memory of

MY WIFE

who suggested this book and without  
whose encouragement it would not have  
been written







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## INTRODUCTION

ONE OF THE most interesting and significant phenomena of the Renaissance was the discovery of classical manuscripts. The end of the Middle Ages and the dawn of the Renaissance were marked by the activities of men like Petrarch, whose awakened interest in Greek caused him to seek Greek manuscripts in old monastic libraries, and Boccaccio, who was so horrified by the conditions he found in the library of Monte Cassino. By the mid-fifteenth century, the treasure hunt was in full swing. Aurispa and Filelfo continued the search for Greek manuscripts. John Lascaris was commissioned by Lorenzo the Magnificent to go east in search

of lost texts. Probably the most important and indefatigable manuscript hunter was Poggio Bracciolini, who delved in the libraries of Reichenau, Weingarten, San Gallen, and others, recovering in San Gallen the *Institutions* of Quintilian, the first three and one-half books of Flaccus' *Argonautica*, eight *Orationes* of Cicero and other plunder. The Quintilian he translated in a little over a month, and when he sent the copy to Florence it was received with as ardent an acclaim as might have been accorded a great statue of classical antiquity. Poggio's fellow citizens realized immediately that he had unearthed a buried treasure of the first magnitude.

It would doubtless have amazed these fifteenth-century archivists had they known that five hundred years later another group of manuscript hunters were to be busily active, digging in libraries and archives, this time not in search of classical manuscripts but looking for

documents which would give information about themselves and their literary and artistic contemporaries. The deeds in which their petty lawsuits were recorded, the records of the deaths of their parents and the births of their children, the tax declarations in which they sought to comply with the law and evade it if possible, would have seemed very unpromising documentary material to them, yet in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries these documents have become as precious to us as were the classical manuscripts to the great scholars of the Renaissance. They give us priceless information not only about the works of art of the Renaissance but about the careers and personalities of the men who created them.

The modern archivist is, therefore, one of the most important of our scholars. Indeed, it is probably fair to say that he is the most important of our scholars. He furnishes the ammunition with which all scholars fight the battle of research.



His work is done unobtrusively. He is usually modest and gets his reward chiefly in the thrill of his own discoveries. His recognition he gets mainly in the footnotes of ponderous tomes on art and literature, yet it is his work that makes the tomes possible. For example, the author of this brief introduction once wrote a *History of Sienese Painting*. It bristles with documentary references — drawn chiefly from the three volumes of Gaetano Milanesi's *Documenti per la Storia dell'Arte Senese*. Milanesi did the work. The writer of the *History* reaped the benefit.

The technical qualifications which an archivist must have may be learned from Mr. Mather's book. He must have a good classical knowledge, he must have patience, and he must have enthusiasm. What Mr. Mather could not say but what might be gleaned by an observant reader, is that the archivist must be a warm and vivid human being. He must have a

sense of human values and an appreciation of homely things. The dust of the archives must not and will not choke his geniality. I trust it is not indiscreet to reveal that the writer, as a young graduate student, was first attracted to Mr. Mather not so much on account of his scholarly research as by his taste in *pizza* and good Tuscan red wine. Fundamentally, the archivist is trying to find out about people, and to do so competently he must know about people, like people, and sympathize with their virtues and their shortcomings. Mr. Mather's book, very modestly and without saying so, reveals him to be one of these.

Mr. Mather's work has proved him to be a great scholar. His book proves him to be a genial writer and, on closer scrutiny, a subtle propagandist. Not enough young scholars nowadays go into archive research. It is toilsome, patience-trying work, and most scholars prefer to rely on the internal evidence of the works

of art plus the documents already published about them. They ignore the fact that only fragments of the treasures available in archives have been excavated and exposed to the light of modern scholarship. Mr. Mather's book reveals not only the necessity for archive research but its fascination as well. Though he does not say so, his book is intended to encourage young scholars to go into what is really the most important field of scholarship. May he succeed as he deserves.

G. H. EDGELL

*Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*



## FOREWORD

WHY AND HOW I BECAME AN ARCHIVIST  
AND WHERE I HAVE STUDIED

THIS BOOK HAS been written in the hope that, by explaining the necessity for Archive Research, describing the methods used in it, and giving some idea of what treasure it yields to Art, History, Biography, Genealogy, and Heraldry, the author may interest the public, who care for these matters, to encourage Archive Research, and stimulate students to pursue it.

When I was living in Florence, Italy, with no thought of research, I received, one day, a letter from my good friend, the late Professor Allan Marquand, who was engaged in writing his monumental monographs (models of their kind) on the della Robbias and other Florentine mas-

ters of glazed terra cotta. The letter contained a request that I have a certain document copied (giving the title of the codex and the probable date of the terra cotta), pay for it, and send it to him, and he would, at once, reimburse me. Through a friend, I was referred to a Florentine expert. She found the document<sup>1</sup> and copied it. I sent it to my friend, after paying her modest charge, and received a letter of thanks with reimbursement and thought no more of the matter.

Later on, I received another letter from Professor Marquand stating that he was studying two large della Robbia medallions of the coats of arms of two Florentine families (naming them) and that he would be grateful if I could have the date of the marriage between the families ascertained. I at once enquired about the expert, a teacher, and was informed that she had literally died in harness, having been stricken, while in her study chair, with a paralytic stroke

which shortly after carried her to a higher sphere. I then decided to try to find the marriage date myself. So, with a letter of introduction from our Consul, I went to the State Archives and made my debut in Archive Research. The date of the marriage was ascertained with little difficulty. I sent the document<sup>2</sup> to Professor Marquand with my compliments and, having been well inoculated with the research germ, told him that, if he had no one else in mind, I would be glad to do any documentary research for him and would do it for friendship. A very appreciative letter came from him in which he said that he would be delighted to accept my offer.

Thus began a delightful relationship which extended through several years. Every weekday found me in the Archives. I possessed an excellent knowledge of Italian and (shades of the good old days!) had been well grounded in Latin in preparatory school and college. So, I rubbed

the rust off my Latin and picked up enough paleography (study of ancient writing) to decipher Latin writings. Many were the Latin and Italian documents (most all of them new) which I copied and sent over to Professor Marquand and, later, had the gratification of seeing published in his beautiful monographs covering the masters of the Florentine School of glazed terra cotta, in conjunction with his sound and scholarly criticism. As I have said, my documentary research had been done for friendship. It was, therefore, highly gratifying to me when, to show his appreciation, Professor Marquand dedicated one of the monographs to me. Since the passing of Professor Marquand, I have, as often as I could, gone to Florence to carry on research, and have been privileged to make a number of important discoveries which have been published in American and Italian art magazines in articles written by me in English and Italian.

This brings me to a tribute which I must pay to an archivist whom I often saw in the Florentine Archives. Padre Lorenzoni was a far greater archivist than I, and devoted many years to research, specializing in Florentine art, and did an amazing amount of work. I know that he had corrected Gaye's *Carleggio Inedito* (a pioneer in discovering, copying, and publishing art documents), and had completed the documents copied by him. Arrangements had been made to have two volumes of the revised Gaye published, to be followed by three volumes of fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth-century documents copied by Lorenzoni and all relating to Florentine art. Many of these must be new and may be of great value. Unfortunately, Lorenzoni passed to the other world before his dream of seeing his lifework in print could be realized. Arrangements to publish his work were canceled, and a niece, to whom he willed his documents, is a



jealous custodian of them. She is hoping that, some day, someone may make a large offer for them without seeing them. In this she may be wise, for I once told a man of an important discovery which I had made, whereupon he stole my brains, used my discovery as the focus of an article which he wrote, and cheerfully claimed my discovery as his own. As a result he lost my friendship.

But, coming back to Lorenzoni's documents, I may some day make an offer for them, if I go to Florence, of the "pig-in-a-poke" variety and, if they become my property, will certainly publish the new and valuable documents; but, if I do, Padre Lorenzoni will be known as their discoverer. If my offer is refused and if no one else buys them, Lorenzoni's life-work, which may contain information of the highest value to Florentine art, may, some day, end in the scrap basket and, eventually, in the incinerator, unless the documents are given either to the Floren-

tine Archives or the Manuscript Room of the Biblioteca Nazionale.\*

I have studied in ten Florentine archives. In Pistoia I have studied in three archives, in one in Prato, in the Archivio di Santa Maria della Quercia near Viterbo, and in the Archivio di Stato in Milan. In Siena I have worked in two archives. In Rome, I have studied in the Archivio di Stato (a letter from the Consul secures admission) and the Biblioteca Casanatensis.

But most of my work in Rome has been done in the Archivio Sagro del Vaticano and the Biblioteca Vaticana. To study in either a letter from the Embassy is necessary. When I was working in the Biblioteca Vaticana, Monsignor Ratti (later Pope Pius XI), then Prefect

\* It is earnestly to be hoped that this has been done, or that they have been sold. When I was last in Florence, in October 1938, they were said still to be in the niece's apartment on Via dei Bardi. If they remained there, Lorenzoni's valuable documents may have been lost forever through Teuton vandalism.

of the Biblioteca, was in charge of the room where the students worked. All of us who were privileged to come in contact with that fine, scholarly gentleman hold him in admiring, grateful, and affectionate memory. I remember one amusing incident. The regulations in the Biblioteca Vaticana are far more formal than in some other Italian archives. The principal one is that, when the student has received a codex (manuscript) from the attendant, he must put it on a reading stand, open it, and keep it open only by wooden pins turning through the bottom of the stand. Thereafter, he is not to touch the pages again for any purpose but to turn them. Being absorbed in my study, I was unconsciously employing a technique which had been permitted elsewhere, and was doing a great deal of handling of the manuscript. Soon I felt a gentle touch on my shoulder and looked up to see the benevolent but firm expression of Monsignor Ratti, who said, "No,

no, you must not do so; but so" — pointing out the printed regulation. Covered with confusion, I apologized and promised to obey the regulations, and during the rest of my time there followed the prescribed Vatican technique to the letter.

All students everywhere should be grateful to Pope Pius XI, for, having been a great librarian and student, he realized the urgent necessity of remedying a grave defect in the Biblioteca Vaticana — the absence of an up-to-date, cross-indexed card catalogue of the books and manuscripts contained in it. So, after he became Pope, he brought over experts from the Library of Congress in Washington to start the system of card-indexing used there. They worked about two years, got the system well started, and left after bringing in a number of Italians. These latter are carrying on and some day (let us hope that it will not be too far off) the Card Index will be completed. The Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence might

well follow this example, for a card index is sorely needed. The Biblioteca in Venice has an excellent card index for the books there.

The author is, he believes, the only person who has had the courage to lecture on Archive Research, and he has done so before groups at the universities of Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, and Johns Hopkins, at the American Academy in Rome, and before the Italy-America Society in Washington.

The title of this book, "Excavating Buried Treasure," has been chosen advisedly. Actually, there is much in common between archive research and archeological excavation, for both are hunting for buried treasure. Both choose the most promising field to work and, in that, the most likely part in which to find the treasure. Having reached the field, the archeologist has to remove earth, sand, rubble, or lava rock, sometimes much of it — all yielding nothing — before he gets

down toward the treasure. This rough elimination of useless covering matter can be done, under supervision, by anyone who can handle a spade. The archivist must eliminate much useless manuscript text and can, of course, hire someone to do this. But since it is mental excavation, there is no material pile of eliminated matter to show that his helper has done his work and, even if he has been conscientious, his rejected material may contain the very documentary information which the archivist hoped to find. For the helper's eye and the bored brain may have automatically passed over the important document. And this can happen to the archivist himself if his eye and attention flag at a crucial moment. Therefore, if the searcher is a wise man, he will make Archive Research a one-man job.

As it is hoped that this book may appeal to all interested in increasing our knowledge of History, Biography, Art, Heraldry, and Genealogy, as well as to

students, the writer has eliminated, as far as practicable, the use of Latin and Italian words. Therefore, when he cites from Latin and Italian documents, he has used his own English translations, which are as literal as possible. The writer pays tribute to the art research which has been done in America in the past, mostly in the field of history. All magazine articles referred to were written by the author, and practically all of the documents in Professor Marquand's books mentioned are his discoveries.

As the notes are given primarily for students, they have been relegated to the back of the book, where there are also examples of fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth-century handwriting of Latin and Italian scribes.

My thanks are due to the *Art Bulletin* and to the *American Journal of Archaeology* for permission to republish Plates III and V respectively.

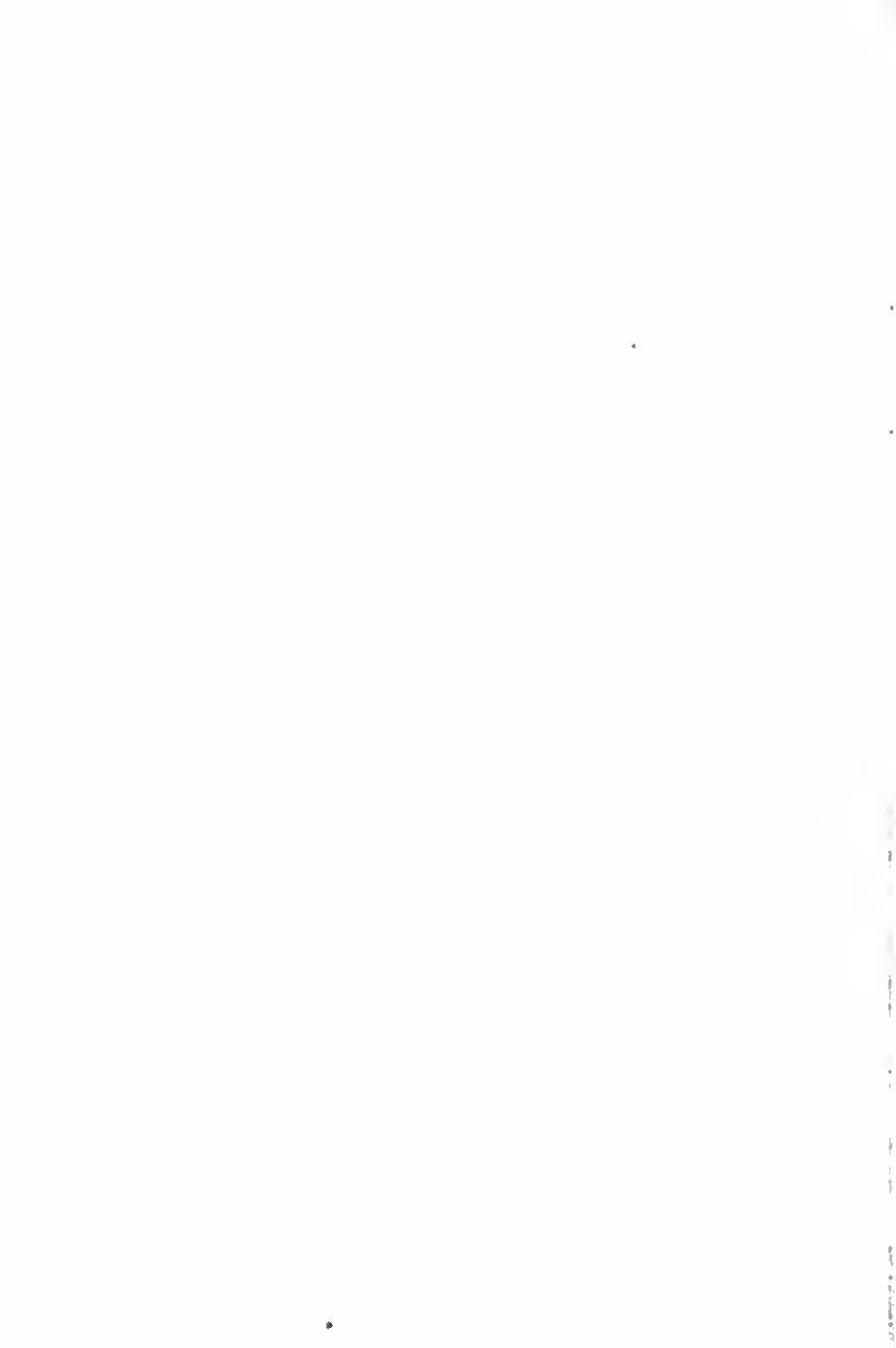
I am grateful to Dr. Paul Sachs for

reading this book and encouraging me to tender it for publication. And my unbounded appreciation goes out to Dr. George H. Edgell, not only for reading my book, making invaluable suggestions, and doing all in his power to further its publication, but for the high honor which he has conferred on it and me by his distinguished sponsorship.

RUFUS GRAVES MATHER

*Williamstown, Massachusetts*





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## THE WHY OF ARCHIVE RESEARCH AND THE PREPARATION FOR IT

THOSE WHO WISH to add fresh life and interest to our knowledge of History, Biography, Art, and Genealogy must pursue Archive Research, and the reason for this is clear. The printed word, in all languages, is an open book to all scholars who know languages, and it has been explored again and again by them to provide material for their writings on the above-mentioned subjects. But, in the world's archives, there is a great source of valuable information — buried treasure — in manuscript which is waiting to be explored but which cannot be unless the scholars can decipher the old handwriting. This is not only trying in itself but com-

plicated by a system of abbreviations and arbitrary signs, so that the scholar must learn not only to read the chirography but, also, these marks and signs of abbreviations, before he can decipher what is written so that anyone can read his expanded copy of the abbreviated original. This system of abbreviation began about the tenth century and grew until, in the thirteenth century, we find it fully developed. It started with Latin, and the reason for it was that, as more and more writings were done by hand and more and more copies of these were also done by hand, much time and labor were saved by the scribes who had learned the system. When the use of the Romance languages (French, Italian, and Spanish) became the vogue, this system, which had been conceived primarily for the writing of Latin, was adapted to the current languages so far as possible, and I have even found traces of it as late as 1629 in English. But as the Romance languages

are very different from their parent, Latin, only a comparatively limited number of the marks and signs referred to could be used. Nevertheless, deciphering of the Romance languages where these marks and signs are used also implies knowledge of them.

There were many hundreds of these signs, but, to give the prospective searcher an idea of the system, I shall show only a few of the simpler ones, which he will encounter not only in Latin but in the Romance languages, using English words to illustrate. The simplest sign was a line drawn over a word to show that a letter or letters were eliminated; this was carried down from ancient Greek and Roman use. Hence *fu<sup>̄</sup>ny* = funny and *o<sup>̄</sup>ibus* = omnibus. The letter *b* with a line drawn through it must be read as bar, bra, ber, or bre. So *ḃon* = baron. The letter *p*, with a straight line across its tail, should be read par, pra, per, or pre. For example, *pish* = parish. When a

loop was drawn through the tail of the p, it meant por or pro. Therefore, p<sup>l</sup>tal = portal. Similarly, s with a line across it should be read ser. So s<sup>l</sup>mon = sermon. The character S alone meant ser, short for messer. All Florentine notaries were known as Ser Andrea, Ser Bernardo, etc., but in writing almost invariably as S Andrea, S Bernardo, etc. The T was also crossed meaning tar, tra, ter, or tre. Thus, T<sup>l</sup>minus = terminus. Finally V was also crossed standing for ver. Hence V<sup>l</sup>se = verse. This will give an idea of the hundreds of signs used, many of them very intricate.

The archivist will find, in his search in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the marks and signs already mentioned, as a rule clearly written. He will later, however, discover that the writers became more and more slipshod and that, in notarial writings in the sixteenth century, the notaries had a way of starting a word and drawing a line downward to

show that it had been abbreviated. In such event, the searcher must reconstruct the words by his knowledge of Latin and by consulting the numerous legal formulas of the time which he will find in print in their expanded form. In the case of a manuscript in a Romance language, he must depend only on his knowledge of that language to complete the abbreviated words so that he may be able to copy them.

Let the archivist not be discouraged by his lack of knowledge of the marks and signs, so repeatedly referred to. Unless his search is in the Chronicles, he can pick up enough knowledge to go ahead at least with notarial writings. But, this statement is premised on a good reading knowledge of Latin and the language in which he is working. This is indispensable. To aid him, he will find several good books on Paleography, showing all the marks and signs (many hundreds) used by the scribes, with many illustrations.

The best is, perhaps, *Dizionario Di Abbreviature, Latine ed Italiane*, edited by Adriano Cappelli and published by Ulrico Hoepli, in Milan, in 1899. Furthermore, he will almost always find the officials in charge of the students' room (most of them highly educated gentlemanly Doctors of Law) most obliging and courteous and eager to help in showing him the ropes. But I must repeat that, without a good reading knowledge of Latin and other languages, he can do no research at all, for such knowledge is absolutely necessary. All he can then do, until he acquires this knowledge, is to employ an expert to do the searching for him, explaining what he wants found, and hope for the best and that his helper will make a conscientious search and find the document. But it stands to reason that the expert can never have the zeal of the interested searcher and he may or may not make a careful search. In any event he will expect to be well paid for it.

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## SOME SOURCES OF TREASURE

Now, where does the searcher find buried treasure which he wants to dig up and show to the world? The writer's search has been mostly artistic, biographical, heraldic, and genealogical. But some of the fields in which he has done mental excavation will produce treasure relating to other subjects, particularly the Chronicles and notarial writings. The manuscripts which I have searched are *baptismal records, marriage records, death records, tax returns, rental books, notarial writings, deliberations or minutes, account books, chronicles and memoirs, Florentine guild books, art archive research records mostly of the seventeenth century, illumina-*



*tions of coats of arms, exhaustive copies of Florentine civic records whose originals have disappeared, hospital and misericordia records, private archives, and British archives. Let us take them up in order.*

## GENEALOGICAL SOURCES

**BAPTISMAL RECORDS:**<sup>3</sup> The records of the Florentine Baptistry are complete back to 1459, and there are fragments back to 1435. The baptism of every child was recorded in a small book used at the Font, and from this transcribed to a larger tome as a permanent record. Each entry records the given name or names of the child, the date of the ceremony, the parish of the father and the name of the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather of the child. This custom of recording the father and grandfather of all adult citizens of Florence (or Italy for

that matter) who are mentioned in any official record comes down from early Roman days and is followed today. A genealogical search in Italy is simple for this reason. In contrast, such a search is most difficult in our country and in England. Let us say that you are trying to trace the lineage of John Smith here or in England. You will never find him in records as more than John Smith, of whom there are legion. If you manage to trace him to the town and parish where he was born, you will get his father's name (if the parish register exists) and perhaps his mother's. But you will never find the name of his paternal grandfather and, still less, that of his great-grandfather, as you will in Italy. For years the writer has been trying to get the name of the grandfather of a man who came here from England in the eighteenth century. The baptismal record gives the name of his father but not his grandfather's, which it has not been possible

definitely to determine. In Italy such an entry as has been referred to would have solved the writer's problem then and there. Happy, therefore, is the lot of the genealogist whose search is in Italy.

**MARRIAGE RECORDS:**<sup>4</sup> In Florence, marriages are verified through the Monte delle Doti, where the dowry was deposited. Sometimes the use of the dowry by the husband was restricted. One day, after working in the fifteenth-century documents of the Monte, I returned to my wife for lunch. She queried, "What in the world have you been doing? Your hands and clothes are covered with dust." To which I replied, "I have been going through some old marriage records of the Monte. Many of the parchment pages are gummed together with silt from the Arno. Many years ago, when these records were kept in an old building on the ground floor, a violent freshet of the river flooded that part of the city and

soaked the registers with muddy water. When they dried out, many of the pages were virtually glued together by the gummy silt. Now the latter is a mass of caked, pervasive, fine powder. Hence, the condition of my hands and clothes."

The *Carte Dei e Pucci* (the work of two famous genealogists of the seventeenth century) also show marriages in the many family trees which they compiled. But, as these men gave their attention to only a limited number of Florentine families, for complete information the searcher must refer to the *Ancisa*, to which I shall return in a later section, which shows all the marriages between all the Florentine families who could qualify for high civic office.

**DEATH RECORDS:**<sup>5</sup> In these we find the date of death and subsequent date of interment of the deceased in his parish church or ancestral vault. All deaths in Florence were recorded except during the

visitations of the famous Black Plague when people died so fast that their deaths could not be officially registered even in Guild Books. A most notable example of this failure of the records occurred about 1530 when Giovanni, son of Andrea della Robbia, died. There is no official record of his death,<sup>6</sup> as the plague was raging in Florence at that time.

## VALUABLE TREASURE BURIED IN TAX RETURNS

Any searcher who, five hundred years from now, goes through the tax returns of today in the hope of getting information of artistic or human value will not only find nothing that is not drab but will wonder whether most people who had to fill in complicated forms year after year did not wind up in a madhouse. But he

who goes through the tax returns of the Florentine artists from 1427 to 1498 will be richly rewarded for his search. In 1427, realizing that the existing tax system was unjust to the taxpayer, Giovanni di Bicci, father of Cosimo de' Medici, Pater Patriae, instituted the Catasto, which functions today under that name. Prior to 1427, the taxpayer was given no opportunity to present his case fairly but paid any tax which was levied by the land-owners. Under the new system, the declarer was authorized to go to the office of the Catasto and, himself, write his own declaration (Portata) with his own hand and, under a little guidance, in his own words; or dictate it to the notary if he could not write. These declarations had to be made in the years 1427, 1430, 1433, 1442, 1446, 1451, 1457, 1470, 1480, and 1498, so far as the fifteenth century was concerned. Up to and including 1459, the declarations were written or dictated by the declarer himself. After

that date, they were written by the notaries of the Catasto from information supplied by the declarer, and only one writing was used, called the Campione. From 1427 to 1457, after the declarer had written his declaration, a copy of it was penned either by the declarer or a notary in another set of books (Campioni) which the notary used to make his notations and calculate the tax. Each Quartiere in the city had its own set of books to record the Portata and Campioni in their respective series. Theoretically, the Campioni was a duplicate of the Portata, but often there was considerable variance between them. Hence both Portata and Campioni should be read by the archivist if he wants to be sure of getting all the information which the declarer gave.

The fifteenth-century Catasto was the father of the modern Catasto or Real Estate Office, and the history of all real property in Florence can be traced back to its owner in 1427 and even some time

before that. From this statement one will gather that the primary reason for the creation of the Catasto in 1427 was to determine the ownership or tenancy of all real estate in Florence and its neighborhood so that a tax could be levied on it. Hence, after stating the Quartiere\* and the Gonfalone† in which he lived, the declarer started his Portata with a short description of the house he lived in, defining accurately the boundaries of the plot on which the house stood and saying whether he owned it or not. If he owned the property, he usually had to tell when he bought it, how much he paid for it, and the name of the notary who prepared the

\* Quartiere, as the name indicates, means Quarter. Florence was divided into four, each named for the most prominent church in that quarter — San Giovanni, Santa Maria Novella, Santa Croce on the north side of the Arno and Santo Spirito on the south side.

† Each Quartiere was divided into four Gonfaloni. Gonfalona means flag, and each of these sixteen subdivisions had its distinctive flag. These flags bore such emblems as an ox, a shell, a serpent, a red lion, to mention only a few. Hence these sections were known as Gonfalone Bue (ox), etc.



deed of sale. If he leased the house, he had to report the amount of the annual rent which he paid. This was true of all residential property. Conversely, the lessee had to make a similar report, and, always, the boundaries had to be accurately defined.

In the case of a farm, the owner was obliged to state whether it was worked on shares (giving the amount of his share in oil, wine, grain, etc.), or leased outright for a definite sum, or leased on a payment partly in cash and partly in kind. And the lessee of similar property had to make a statement of the same kind in his declaration. To repeat, all owners of real estate, whether residential or agricultural, had to report when they bought, how much was paid, and the notary who prepared the deed. Likewise, if they had bought or sold any real estate of any kind the same details of the transactions had to be written.

The declarer had, also, to list the names

of his creditors with the amount of indebtedness to each, and the same was true of his debtors. If the declarer were an artist working on an order, he was supposed to state how much money he had been paid and how much more was due him;<sup>7</sup> and, if he was in partnership <sup>8</sup> with another artist, how much he had received and how much more he should receive as his share. Such statements are invaluable to the archivist who is seeking information about art, for usually a good description of the artist's creation, who ordered it, and where it was to be placed is given and, sometimes, the declaration is the only document which exists for that particular creation. The declarer had also to report if he had funds on deposit, and how much, in the Civic Loan Office, and also the amount of loans which he might have received, if any, from the same office.

The declarer ended his Portata by listing under the heading Bocche <sup>9</sup> (mouths)

his name, his wife's name, those of his children, and any relatives living under his roof. He also gave the ages (usually a wild guess on his part, even of his own at times) of all the household members listed. If a son was working, the name of the employer had to be given, and if a daughter was mentioned, how much dowry had been deposited for her in the Monte delle Doti (Dowry Office). If there was no dowry deposit, the declarer said so. Furthermore, if an addition to the family was expected about the time when he had to write his declaration, he was careful to say so for reasons which will be explained later on. This heading "Mouths" was full of significance, for the mouths had to be fed and thus constituted a fixed liability. Recognizing this fact, the officials of the Catasto allowed a deduction of 200 Florins for every "mouth." Just how this amount was determined and why it remained the same for seventy years is not known. The Catasto ser-

tinized with the utmost care these lists of "mouths," and the declarer had to prove, to the satisfaction of the officials, that he really had to feed them. In connection with the "mouths" sometimes very interesting information is given on the psychology of the declarer. In view of the 200 - Florin deduction for each "mouth," it was to the interest of the declarer to show to the Catasto as many "mouths" as he could and hope that the officials would pass favorably on possibly doubtful ones. Two examples of this will suffice.

Michelozzo, architect and sculptor, seems to have had almost Yankee shrewdness. In his declaration of 1433,<sup>10</sup> in the list of "mouths" he writes thus about his mother: "We have our Mother, Antonia, 70 years old infirm and blind. And it is necessary to maintain the person, who is attending to her, at considerable expense and annoyance." In a previous declaration the attendant is mentioned as a

"boy." That statement was made in 1427 and, after six years of service, the boy is, apparently, getting obnoxious. Michelozzo's hope in 1433 was, of course, to get a deduction of 200 Florins for maintaining the boy's mouth. But, when we consult the Campione for 1433, we find that the Catasto, while admitting the expense and annoyance, did not grant the deduction. In fairness to the officials of the Catasto, it was probably ascertained that the boy had been listed by his father, a nearby neighbor, who had claimed the usual deduction for feeding his son's mouth, and that the boy went from home to attend the ill and blind mother.

Another of these human-interest revelations relates to the great master of terracotta, Andrea della Robbia, when he made his tax declaration about August 15, 1480.<sup>11</sup> In the list of "mouths," after recording the names and ages of himself, his wife, and seven children, he added

after the name of his wife (here I give a word-for-word translation) "and is to make a child from day to day." The reason for this statement is obvious. But the facts are that the officials of the Catasto did not grant the usual deduction of 200 Florins for this expected mouth, which actually appeared on earth two or three days *after* Andrea made his declaration. The notaries seem to have lived up to the letter of the law, that no "mouth" not actually under the father's roof and visible to the eye when he wrote his Portata was entitled to the deduction. This requirement was enforced even in the case of the absence of the head of the house from Florence so that a brother, son, or other relative had to make the declaration for him. A notable example is the case of Michelozzo,<sup>12</sup> who was at Ragusa in 1470, when his son wrote the Portata for him. His wife and children were all allowed the usual deduction of 200 Florins; but Michelozzo himself received no

deduction. There are numerous examples of similar refusals of this deduction to artists and citizens, heads of families, who were absent from Florence when a relative made the declaration for them. Before taking leave of the "mouths," let me warn the searcher against accepting the ages given for them. They were almost always wrong — sometimes fantastically so. The only accurate information to be derived concerning the ages comes from the Baptismal Books of the Florentine Baptistry of San Giovanni.

Sometimes these Portata give artistic information of the highest value. I will mention only one. Michelozzo wrote his declaration in 1442<sup>13</sup> with his own hand. On the margin, a notary of the Catasto wrote, "Sculptor on the doors of San Giovanni." A similar note was written by a notary on the Portata of Ghiberti made a few days after that of Michelozzo. No similar marginal note is to be found on the declarations made in 1442 by any

contemporary sculptor or painter. The marginal note on Michelozzo's declaration showed, by its very presence, that Michelozzo must have taken a prominent part in the making of the famous doors. This note honoring Michelozzo is of particular significance, as a statement made by Michelozzo in his declaration indicates that he had ceased to work on the doors at least one year and perhaps two before the marginal note on his Portata was written. So far as the writer knows, this note is the only documentary evidence that Michelozzo worked with Ghiberti on the doors.

Two more cases which throw light on the psychology of two famous artists are of real interest. In 1451, Andrea del Verrocchio<sup>14</sup> wrote his declaration and, after listing his age as twenty-one and that of his brother Maso as sixteen, at the end he made this statement: "I find myself at the age which you see and with little work, as I used to be at the gold-



smiths and because he is no longer practicing his art I am no longer there and the brother is with Romolo Ciecchi on salary and we are not earning our hose." This shows not only that Andrea had a happy-go-lucky disposition but that he had an active funny-bone, when he could use an expression corresponding to our modern "not earning one's salt" or "heing on one's uppers."

The last example of this kind which I shall give relates to the *Portata*<sup>15</sup> written by the great Donatello in 1457. After listing his debtors and a lump statement of the amount owed him by them he wrote, "and I don't expect to cash in on any of it." He then follows with a lump statement of his debts and writes, "and I hold them in as little esteem as I do the credits which I cannot collect." Truly an informative and delightful philosophy, which Donatello had arrived at when he was seventy-five years old.

There is no necessity to describe in

detail how the tax was computed in Florence in the fifteenth century, as it was somewhat complicated. It is enough to state that, in general, everything which could be considered as a liability was summed up. Also all allowable and approved credits, including the "mouth" deductions, were totaled. If the sum of the former was more than the sum of the latter, the tax was levied on the difference. And, of course, if it was less, there was no tax. In which case, the notary of the Catasto might note at the foot of the declaration: "He has nothing." We find this notation at the end of Donatello's declaration of 1433,<sup>16</sup> written by his own hand. The tax usually began at 2 soldi (2 cents at normal rate of exchange) and ended at a figure large for those days, in the cases of owners of much Real Estate.

And one more example which should give pause to many a modern tax declarer. In 1427 we find a citizen not only much impressed by the dignity (perhaps

enhanced by his unconscious fear) of the Catasto but also by his own responsibility to tell the truth. So, we find this statement: "I Antonio . . . shall tell you the truth about everything which I have." And later, when telling of his family, he writes: "Here I shall write the truth about the wife and of the children and how old they were" (he lists three children): "These three children were sons of a first wife of mine whom I had and this one which I have at present it is 13 years since I married her and I have had of her 7 children" (naming them). Could anything be more naive and charming?

A searcher of our tax returns in 2427 will look in vain for such delightful records of human interest. Let us leave the Catasto with the pleasant impression which this record of five hundred years has brought to us.

## A THEORETICALLY UNPROFIT- ABLE FIELD FOR RESEARCH

**RENTAL BOOKS:** These would, generally, be considered one of the most unlikely sources of information about Florentine art. But, if the landlord was a wealthy religious organization or individual and the tenant was an artist, very valuable information may be found in the rental account between the two. The writer, while consulting the Rental Books of the Florentine Capitolo, found under an account with Luca della Robbia, who was a tenant of one of their houses in Via Guelfa (which still exists), a credit <sup>17</sup> in 1446 for work done by Luca in terra cotta in the church at Impruneta, near Florence, a dependency of the Capitolo. So far as I know, this is the only document relating to these glazed terra cottas. Later, in 1500 (having assumed the lease after his uncle's death in 1480), Andrea della Robbia received credit for the em-

blem of the Capitolo in terra cotta for the church at Signa and for a similar emblem for the church of San Michele at Lomena.<sup>18</sup> Again, this is, so far as I know, the only document for the latter.

Another example relates to Benedetto Buglioni, eccentric master in terra cotta, contemporary of Andrea della Robbia. Benedetto leased a house from the Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova in Florence on September 12, 1489, and agreed to pay as rent Lire 24 in cash and a pair of capons every six months. The Rental Book<sup>19</sup> of the Hospital shows, in 1510, that Benedetto was behind in cash and capon payments; he had delivered 10 pairs of capons valued at 1 Florin (\$1.40 at modern exchange or 7¢ each, modern housekeepers please notice), and then no more cash and no more capons. In 1512 the record shows that Benedetto was in arrears both as to cash, 4 Florins, and 8½ pairs of fowls — two years' rent. The Hospital authorities doubtless felt that some action

must be taken to remedy the situation, and may have reasoned something like this: "Our tenant is a very casual and erratic sculptor who is behind two years in his rent and shows no signs of doing anything about it. But he is a master in terra cotta. Our dependent Ospedale del Ceppo at Pistoia has an undecorated front door and needs a medallion coat of arms of the Hospital. Why not give him a commission to make a lunette for the door and the coat of arms in terra cotta and credit their value against his back rent?" Be that as it may, such a commission was given and the lunette and coat of arms were made. So, it may well be that today we see a glazed terra cotta of the coat of arms<sup>19</sup> on a side of the Portico of the Hospital at Pistoia, and a glazed terra cotta lunette representing God the Father crowning the Holy Virgin<sup>19</sup> over the door of the chapel next to the Hospital because Benedetto Buglioni's cash account was nonexistent and his

chicken coop had suffered annihilation.

The bookkeeper of the Ospedale di Santa Maria was a zealous man when Donatello was (or rather had been) its tenant. For in a rental account of Donatello I found this item<sup>20</sup> under date of 1475: "Donato . . . must give xxxiiii Fiorini as balance of rent of a house he leases from this hospital." So Donatello, nine years after his death, is still considered responsible for back rent on a house which he seems to have left about 1433. Truly great was the Florentine bookkeeper in 1475. From these cited records, one sees that much more than drab rental payments may be derived from the search of Rental Books.

## A RICH FIELD FOR MENTAL EXCAVATION

NOTARIAL WRITINGS: When a religious or secular corporation or a rich patron

gave a commission to an artist, a contract was almost invariably drawn up by a notary. Fortunate is the archivist whose zeal or luck may enable him to find the name and writings of the notary or notaries of such corporations or patrons who drew their contracts for them. If the papers of the notaries exist, and the searcher finds contracts relating to such commissions given to artists, he will be richly rewarded. The contract will give him a description of the object to be made by the artist, more than often a statement of where it is to be placed, the price to be paid, and the period within which the commission is to be finished. Often a clause is added imposing a forfeit if it is not completed in the time specified. Many such contracts have been found and published. No one can say how many more zealous archivists may still find. The writer found a splendid unknown contract for the terra cotta medallions of Giovanni della Robbia to be seen



today on the façade of the Ospedale del Ceppo at Pistoia. This contract was published.<sup>21</sup>

**WILLS:** Those archivists who are interested in art should study the wills of the artists. The searcher in Florence is fortunate; for, while most all of the executed and registered testaments of Florentine citizens of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries have disappeared, most fortunately many of the notarial drafts are extant. This fact is a real boon to the archivist, for the drafts tell him far more than the executed testaments could if they existed. The reason is that the notary made a tentative draft, and when the testator wanted changes made the notary noted the amendments, cancellations, etc., on the original draft, which he kept as his record. Thus we can see the working of the testator's mind and learn why he made alterations. This, naturally, the executed will never shows. The next paragraph shows how the no-

tarial drafts of Luca and Andrea della Robbia's testaments enable this archivist to expose their psychology.

Wills are, of course, of invaluable help in genealogical search in all countries, but sometimes they provide evidence of family disagreement which may be of great value. Such a disagreement occurred in the case of the wills of Luca della Robbia and his nephew, Andrea. The Florentine wills often begin: "As nothing is more certain than death and nothing more uncertain than its hour," etc., after which the text of the will follows. The writer discovered that a serious row had developed in the della Robbia family when he corrected Gaye's transcription of Luca della Robbia's will dated February 19, 1470 (modern style 1471), transcribed much of it which Gaye did not copy, published it,<sup>22</sup> and followed it up with the discovery of a will of Andrea della Robbia dated September 16, 1522, a Codicil dated February 18, 1522 (modern style

1523), and a Revocation of the will dated June 3, 1524. These were also published.<sup>23</sup> The story is a sad one. Luca della Robbia had two nephews, Andrea and Simone, to inherit his property. Andrea was a sculptor and Simone merely a firer of terra cotta. Luca in his will stated that, as he had taught Andrea his art, and as his (Luca's) atelier had been lucrative — even super-lucrative — and promised to continue to be so, and as with its credits and good will, if Andrea carried it on, it would provide a very fine living for Andrea and his family, therefore he was giving the atelier and its credits to Andrea. Then he goes on to say that, as he had taught Simone nothing because he was practicing another craft, and as what he proposed to leave him did not equal the value of his bequest to Andrea, he was making Simone his residuary legatee. This latter clause was written in two lines. Apparently Luca feared that this will would make trouble,

so we find the two lines of this clause rewritten below the first draft in sixteen lines, in the strongest legal language possible, so that it would stand against possible protest by Andrea. Luca succeeded in gaining this point, but after his decease the trouble began. For after the death of Luca, when the will came into effect, Andrea doubtless was grateful to have the atelier with its credits and good will left to him, but, with a large family to support, he probably also felt that without his own genius and hard work to carry on the atelier it would be of small value to him and his family. On the other hand, as documents show, Simone had in 1481 power of attorney from his uncle over a large sum of money which Luca had on deposit in the Civic Bank <sup>22</sup> and, as Luca had been successful financially, the residuary estate in savings and other cash assets must have been large for an artist of those days. In other words, Simone, without lifting a finger,

inherited a very good fortune. That this reasoning is justified and bitter feeling arose between the brothers is shown by documents<sup>24</sup> which state that in 1485, some years after the death of Luca, Simone and his family left the della Robbia home in Via Guelfa and moved over into the parish of Sant' Ambrogio. The records show that Simone died there and was buried in Sant' Ambrogio instead of the nearby church of San Pietro Maggiore (now destroyed) where the della Robbias had been interred for generations. Clearly, we have Simone going to his fathers unreconciled to his brother Andrea.

Let us now turn to Andrea's will of 1522 and see what he dictated about his residuary estate. He left cash bequests and cloth for habits to his two Dominican daughters, and an annuity bequest to his married daughter, Maria. To his wife he left the use of a farm with its equipment and revenues for life and (a touching

note) cloth to make her widow's weeds. His two sons who were Dominican Friars are not mentioned, since, by the rule of their Order, they could not inherit anything. His Dominican daughters could, as we have seen, for such bequests were considered as their dowries since they had "married" the church.

Coming back to the disposal of the residuary estate, one sees clearly that Andrea remembered that his uncle's will had caused an irreconcilable quarrel between him and his brother Simone and determined that no such serious disagreement should arise between his heirs. For we read these highly significant words, "and wishing to avoid the scandals which are often accustomed to arise in the division of possessions and divides houses" — these last three words were added to the first draft\* — he gives directions, in the hope of avoiding possible trouble among

\* In this connection the comment on Plate V should be carefully read.

his sons, to the effect that he bequeathed his residuary estate to his three lay sons, Giovanni, Luca, and Girolamo, in "equal shares." Five months later Andrea wrote a codicil to his will, and then, being about eighty-seven and a half years old, probably thought that he could end his days in peace. But this was not to be, for a year and four months after the codicil he signed a revocation of his will, June 3, 1524, which I found. This document fairly booms with legal thunder. After stating that he had made a will, giving the date and the name of the notary who drew it, he says that he has repented and "voided and voids it, canceled and cancels it, nullified and nullifies it, annulled and annuls it and wished and wishes it considered as voided, canceled, nullified and annulled." Perhaps to insure the effectiveness of this revocation Andrea chose a notary who had not drawn the will. As we read this revocation, we can almost hear Andrea, then eighty-eight

years and nine months old, say to his notary, "Kill my will! Kill it so that it can never come to life again." And killed it was, for official records show that, while he lived a year and three months longer, he never made another will and died intestate; in 1528, three years after their father's death, his three lay sons, Giovanni, Luca, and Girolamo, were named as heirs share and share alike.

What brought this about? We must turn to Andrea's will to find the cause, bearing in mind that all three lay sons worked in glazed terra cotta, Giovanni having his own atelier, Girolamo working with his father, Luca having started with his father but by 1518 working mostly on his own. A part of Andrea's residuary estate was the atelier containing the troughs for mixing the clay and the furnace to fire it — the heart and working plant of the industry. The room containing this equipment was left to one son in the will and to another in the codicil;



and there must have been other parts of the will and codicil which did not please all the sons. We can see the father, over eighty-seven years old, who may have committed the serious error of showing his will to his sons, continually pestered by one son after the other to change the will in his favor. The aged father seems to have had his patience exhausted after a year and three months of such nagging and pressure and thus, being eighty-eight years and three months old, we can almost hear his protest and decision. It may have been something like this: "A plague on you all! I can't and won't be bothered by you any more and I will not. I must try to have some peace for the short time more I may have in this life. So, I am voiding my will and you ungrateful sons must deal with the law to inherit my property." Then he called in his notary and had him draw up the annulment for him. Between the date of the codicil and that of the revocation his wife seems

to have died; his married daughter had also passed on, thus automatically voiding the annuity mentioned in the will; his Dominican daughters would, of course, be maintained by the Monastero di Santa Lucia; his Dominican sons could not inherit property; thus only the three lay sons could be his heirs. So, in 1528 those three sons were authorized<sup>25</sup> to receive one third each of their father's estate, Giovanni and Luca being in Florence and Girolamo being then in France. Giovanni may have received nothing, for official records<sup>25</sup> show that his wife was a widow early in 1530. He must have died of the plague which was devastating Florence at that time. From all this one sees that much more than genealogical information may be derived from the deciphering of wills.<sup>26</sup>

Before taking leave of the notaries, here is something which happened to the writer. During a search in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, he found

three unknown powers of attorney given by Giotto, at various times, to three separate notaries. Being of no value, except possibly indicating planned absences from Florence (but even that was mere guess work), they were never published. But at these discoveries the author's heart sang within him as he visualized possible important discoveries concerning Giotto's work through consulting the writings of the three notaries. To his chagrin and sorrow, reference to the index of the notaries showed that all of their writings had been lost. What might they not have revealed had they existed today! This incident is mentioned to show one of the woes which an archivist must expect to face bravely.

## A FIELD TO BE WELL EXPLORED

**CHRONICLES AND MEMOIRS:** These may be classed together, whether they refer to

religious or lay corporations. They are, of course, chiefly useful to the historian; but the searcher for information about art may sometimes find references of value to the art monuments owned by the corporations.

**DELIBERATIONS:**<sup>27</sup> These codices, which record the deliberations or minutes of the religious or lay corporations, are a rich field for the searcher who is interested in art, for all the commissions given to the artists by these corporations were authorized by these recordings of the sessions of their governing committees. The archivist will find in these records almost everything which he needs to know about any commission given to any artist. In whatever country the archivist may pursue his search, he should consult the Deliberations of any corporation if he feels that they may give information for his particular search.

## ANOTHER FIELD WHICH YIELDS RICH TREASURE

ACCOUNT BOOKS: These were Cassa (Cash), Entrata e Useita (Income and Outgo), Giornale (Day Book), Quaderno (Copy Book), and Libro Maestro (Ledger). I know of only one corporation, the Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova in Florence, the whole series of whose books goes back intact for over five hundred years, and some of them go back as far as the early thirteenth century. In other corporations where the bookkeeping required only a comparatively few of the many books which I have listed, the Account Books go back intact for centuries. But often only one set (for instance Cash, or Income and Outgo, or Ledger) may exist today. The Account Books may give invaluable art information. Very often the payments to the artists are passed through the whole series of books, and not always in

the same wording; so one book may give information not found in the others. Hence the conscientious searcher should go through all the different books for complete information about the commissions in which he is interested. These records will usually give him all the information he needs — a brief description of the work of art, where it was to be placed or had been placed, the price paid whether in instalments or *en bloc*, with the dates of such payments. Comparing these payments with the contract for the commission, if it has been published, the searcher will find sometimes that the time limit specified in the contract was actually exceeded by a year or even two without forfeit. These books also register entries of failure to pay part or even all of the price agreed upon with the artist. This happened to Michelozzo, architect and sculptor, who was never paid anything at all by the Frati dei Servi<sup>28</sup> in Florence (today SS Annunziata) for work

done on that church thirty-nine years before he died in 1472. This is merely an example of what must too often have been the treatment of the Florentine artists of the fifteenth century.

At times, also, the Account Books will give valuable information which the searcher did not expect to find. This happened to the writer, who published a document found in a Cash Book of 1523 of the Certosa di Val d'Ema near Florence. He owes the discovery, or rather re-discovery, of this important document to a brief note left by a famous fore-runner, Gaetano Milanese, who republished and annotated Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*. Here is a slightly modernized translation of the document:<sup>29</sup>

Jesus Mary's Son on the 13th day of February  
1523 [modern style 1524]

Cash debited      should have

For the said expenses [of the fabric] twenty-two  
ducats six lire fourteen soldi and it was on the 12th  
day of the said [month] for 66 heads placed in the

Cloister of the Monks and the Isaiah over the cistern which amounted to 24 lire 10 soldi and the heads at 40 soldi each we paid to Master Giovanni della Robbia in Florence and 4 lire 4 soldi he had extra which he ought not to have had and which he had as a gift Ducats 22 lire 6 soldi 14.

Every visitor to Florence should visit this monastery. Those who have seen the Cloister will remember the 66 heads of Saints, Doctors of the Church, Apostles etc., and (here note carefully) one of Christ; but they might have been even more interested had they known what this document shows, that Giovanni della Robbia was paid 40 soldi (40 cents at normal modern rate of exchange) for each head. But no visitor of today will see the terra cotta statue of the Prophet Isaiah over the big cistern in the center of the Cloister. Instead, he will see the handsome wellhead with metal decoration attributed to Michelangelo. As a matter of fact, no one in these days knew, until the writer published the document, that there ever had been a statue of



Isaiah where the present wellhead is. If a visitor had gone to the Cloister in 1524, however, he would have seen over the cistern not the present wellhead but a single marble column with a crane and pulley, chain and bucket, and on top of that column the statue of Isaiah. Thus, he would have seen that the focal point of the entire decoration was Isaiah, to whom all the Saints, etc., and, above all, Christ, were paying honor. It seems probable that not long after Isaiah was put in place the statue was shaken down by an earthquake and dashed to pieces on the hard cement top of the cistern. The writer also found that on top of the tall column which stands today in Piazza di Santa Felicita there used to stand a terra cotta statue of Saint Peter Martyr. It is no longer there, but was shaken down by an earthquake (perhaps the same which demolished Isaiah) and smashed to bits on the stone pavement many feet below. It will be noted that Giovanni

received about \$5.00 (at modern normal exchange) for the Isaiah.

Why was Isaiah given the post of honor with all the Saints, etc., and even Christ doing honor to him? Perhaps the patron saint of the Prior at that time was Isaiah. Or, perhaps, he was the patron saint of the most powerful and richest supporter of the monastery. The writer dislikes to attribute worldly wisdom to monks, but it may well be they figured that doing special honor to this patron would do no possible harm to the future exchequer of their monastery and might even enhance it. Or, to take a more kindly attitude, it may have been merely an expression of thanks for past favors.

The closing clause of the document is delightful and replete with human interest. The Friar Bookkeeper, who made a mistake in his calculations, seems to have shown a laudable sense of face-saving in the wording used and a commendable talent for time-saving in avoid-

ing correcting his book, by stating that the over-payment was a gift.

### THREE FLORENTINE FIELDS WHICH WELL REPAY EXCAVATING

FLORENTINE GUILD BOOKS: The Guilds had their Books of Matriculation of their members, their Deliberations, and Account Books with their members and outsiders. In the case of some of the Guilds many of these books exist. In the case of others only a few, perhaps only the Matriculation Books, are extant, particularly as regards the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The writer has searched somewhat in the records of the Guild of Judges and Notaries and the Guild of the Masters of Stone and Wood, but more largely in those of the Guild of Physicians and Chemists. Most sculptors matriculated

in the Guild of the Masters of Stone and Wood and many painters in the Guild of Physicians and Chemists. The Charter of the latter states that as chemists produced the colors and painters used them, the latter could qualify in the Guild as chemists. Where the Deliberations<sup>30</sup> exist, we may find valuable commissions given to the artists by the Guild. This was the case in the Guild of the Masters of Stone and Wood, who gave a commission to Andrea della Robbia to make a Madonna and Child in glazed terra cotta with their coat of arms. This relief is now in the Museo del Bargello in Florence.

Coming now to the Guild of Physicians and Chemists, to which, I have already said, painters could qualify for admittance, we find that of its fourteenth-century records only two codices exist — one, known as Libro D, recording matriculations in the Guild from 1320 to 1347, and the other, Libro E, recording matricu-

lations covering the rest of the century. In 1446/7, an index was made of Libro A, Libro B, and Libro C (which preceded Libro D and were lost after the index was made), as well as Libro D and Libro E. This index was accepted by all, as the compilers stated that they had found the names of the painters Giotto di Bondone, Gaddo Gaddi, and Bernardo Daddi in Libro C (now lost as stated) which began in 1312 and ended in 1319. Therefore, all critics and writers about painting accepted the index as authoritative and, in writing about the three painters aforementioned, stated positively that all three were admitted to the Guild in 1312. The writer was not contented with the index, and since Libro D was the earliest extant, he made a careful study of it. Through a procedure, too long to give here, he proved incontestably that the three painters were not admitted to the Guild until 1327, in which year the painter Ambrogio Lorenzetti of Siena also matriculated.

As Vasari stated that Gaddo Gaddi died in 1312, the writer's discovery automatically gave him at least fifteen more years of life, and he must be reckoned with as a possible producer of paintings or mosaics during the period 1312 to 1327. The author wrote a complete account of his study and findings in Libro D which was published <sup>31</sup> and which has not been contested, nor can it be successfully.

LA COMPAGNIA DI SAN LUCA: This may be appropriately dealt with here as, while it was not a Guild, it was preëminently the association of the artists — a religious confraternity for mutual benefit. As St. Luke was, according to tradition, a painter, it was logical that he was chosen to be the patron saint of the Compagnia. Most of the famous painters and many of the sculptors of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries became members of the Compagnia, doubtless after successfully meeting certain qualifications.

The earliest record of the Compagnia is the Charter framed in 1339 and written on parchment. To this is attached a record of members' names from 1350 to 1532. This Register, also written on parchment, had generally been accepted as showing that the year entered after each member's name meant the year in which that member had been admitted to the Compagnia. The entries in the Register after 1406 and continuing to 1532 definitely showed dates of admission. But there was much doubt as to what relation there was between the names of the members and the dates following their names prior to 1406. The writer made an exhaustive study of this Register and was able to give irrefutable proof that prior to 1406 the date following a member's name meant the year of his death. After 1406 the Compagnia decided to make the Register a record of admissions to the Compagnia and so, no longer, a Book of the Dead. The results

of the writer's study of this Register were also published.<sup>32</sup>

**ART ARCHIVE RESEARCH RECORDS:** During the seventeenth century, there were several archivists who specialized on art and genealogy. Perhaps the most famous of these was Ferdinando del Mighore, whose notes may be found in the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence. In modern times, there was the father of modern art research, Gaetano Milanese, to whom we all bow in reverence as a great archivist, who annotated, with his many discoveries, Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*. He did an amazing amount of research of the utmost value to art and left his notes to the Biblioteca in Siena, his native city. There was also a Florentine, Gargano Gargani, who left many valuable genealogical and historical notes, with some artistic, which are known as the *Carte Gargani* and may be studied in the Manuscript Room of the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence.



## HERALDRY IN ITS RELATION TO ART

**ILLUMINATED COATS OF ARMS:** One of the most interesting branches of the writer's studies has been heraldry. Many do not realize the importance of knowing something about heraldry in dating works of art. As engagements were short in the old days, it is safe to say that when painted marriage chests were ordered for brides in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Italy they were finished some time during the year preceding the marriage. These chests were often ordered in pairs. Usually on the front, sometimes on the sides, always to the left of the observer, the coat of arms of the groom was emblazoned, since this, the dexter side (the right in heraldry), was considered the more honorable side. The heraldic point of view is that of the knight on horseback or on foot, carrying his shield on his left arm over his chest, while

his right arm held the sword to attack or defend. The bride's coat of arms will, therefore, be found on the sinister (left in heraldry) side, which is to the right of the observer.

The subjects painted on these chests were generally those referring to wifely fidelity or romanec, such as, for instance, the Siege of Troy, Ulysses and Penelope, Griselda the Beggar Maid, and the story of Lucretia, to list only a very few of the many subjects depicted. Sometimes a series of wall panels with a similar story was painted for a marriage, and in such cases the coats of arms of the groom and bride might appear on one of the panels, on the dexter and sinister sides respectively. Many bed heads with amorous stories and many spalliere (bench backs) were also painted, sometimes with the groom's and bride's coats of arms emblazoned. There are many painted altar pieces and altar pieces and ciboria (holders of the Sacred Wafer) in marble, pietra

serena, or terra cotta, bearing the coats of arms of the couple either individually or placed together in one shield, in each case the groom's arms being on the dexter and the bride's on the sinister side. Painted altar pieces also, some of marble or terra cotta, often bore the arms of the donor at the sinister end and that of the individual — say a Cardinal — whom he wished to honor on the dexter side. It is apparent, therefore, that when the coats of arms of a couple on a chest indicate a marriage, if we can identify the families represented by the coats of arms and discover when a marriage corresponding to these arms took place, we can definitely state that the chest was painted some time during the year preceding. The same is true of spalliere, bed heads, and altar or other pieces given to the Church as marriage gifts. Naturally, in the case of these latter the presence of the coats of arms of two families may not necessarily mean a marriage gift, but a donation

made years later. Except as style may be a more conclusive factor in dating the gift, all one can say is that, of necessity, it was made after the date of the marriage.

The writer's searches brought forth an interesting sidelight. Andrea della Robbia's large, terra cotta altarpiece<sup>23</sup> at La Verna, representing the kneeling Virgin adoring the Christ Child lying on the ground, appears to have made a great sensation in Florence about 1479 when it was made. (Andrea's uncle, Luca, created this motive, and we have extant examples to show that he sometimes reversed the positions of the Virgin and Child so as to give the honor to the former.) The same motive was used in a round-topped shape in very small size, with varying accessories to the group *ad infinitum*. These reliefs were all originally framed to the base or console by colored garlands of fruits, flowers, vegetables, and pine cones. The traveller in Italy sees many of these,

either with or without the framing, in Florence. Some of these and some in private collections bear marriage coats of arms. The writer dated all these marriages,<sup>34</sup> which took place in Florence between 1484 and 1486. It would seem to have been the fashion for newly married couples to give this Adoration to some chapel as a wedding offering during that period.

In addition to the monuments above mentioned, there were the *Desehi da Parto* (birth salvers) of wood, the earlier ones having a twelve-sided moulding, an integral part of the board, which in the sixteenth century was round. We even find that the salver was in that century like an alms plate in shape. These salvers seem to have been used to bear presents to the mother of the newly born child. The subjects painted on the front usually were appropriate, such as the Birth of the Virgin, the Birth of St. John the Baptist, the Fountain of Youth, etc. Some-

times the subject was entirely pagan — a lightly draped Venus, for instance, lying in a landscape. On the front of the salver, but more commonly on the back, were emblazoned the coats of arms of the child's parents, either in separate shields or placed together in one shield; and in rare cases the arms of the two paternal and two maternal grandparents appear also, to show the child's lineage on four sides. I know, personally, of only one such example — a magnificent specimen from the fourteenth century, the earliest that I know. This was in the Gallery at Douai, in northeastern France. The subject on the front is the Fountain of Youth. The back is superb, the finest I have ever seen. On a rich maroon ground with beautiful green ivy decoration there is an elaborate chess board with azure and gold squares, and outside the four corners are the four ancestral arms of the child. The raised frame of twelve sides is an integral part of the painted center. I made every

effort to identify the families of the arms and succeeded with three, but although a drastic search was made through numerous books of coats of arms the fourth could not be identified. It must be a very ancient fourteenth- or even thirteenth-century coat.

The writer feels that it is not unreasonable to believe that these salvers were painted for the birth of the first child and that they were kept to be used for the later arrivals in the same family. It is his belief, therefore, that, if we determine the date of the birth of the first child, we virtually date the salver itself. Comparatively few of these birth salvers exist, and in the case of a number of them, as they were on panel, the wood has buckled and even split, so that to save the painted front the back has had to be cradled, thus destroying whatever was painted there, including coats of arms if they do not appear on the front.

Before taking up the methods used to

identify emblazoned coats of arms, I will deal here with the system used before heraldry appeared. Prior to the introduction of heraldry, individuals whether regal, noble laic, or cleric used on their seals monograms of the initials of their names, and in the case of emperors, kings, and high dignitaries, those of their titles also. Some of the royal seals were most elaborate. Those of the churchmen were simple for the priest, and more and more elaborate as the cleric rose higher and higher in the hierarchy. If the cleric were a bishop, a one-armed cross (sometimes crowned with a mitre) rising through and above the monogram indicated his rank. In the case of an archbishop, the cross had two arms and was surmounted by an archbishop's mitre. In the case of a cardinal, the cross still bore two arms and over it was the broad-brimmed red hat with elaborate tassels each side. A patriarch was designated merely by the two-armed cross. A



Pope's cross bore three arms, and above it, resting on the crossed Keys of Saint Peter, was the triple tiara. After the firm establishment of heraldry in the early thirteenth century, the clerics used their secular heraldic coats of arms surmounted by the mitre, archbishop's mitre, cardinal's hat or Papal tiara.

I recall one interesting problem which I solved by identifying one of these ecclesiastical monogram coats of arms or seals. One day I received in Florence a letter from my dear friend, the late Professor Allan Marquand, the great authority on the Florentine Masters of Terra Cotta, which read something like this: "In a church [naming it] at Trapani, in a niche of one of the chapels, there is a three-quarter life-sized della Robbia statue of the Virgin.<sup>35</sup> On the base of the statue there is a secular coat of arms [giving a sketch of it] and to its right [the honorable side, the left to the ob-

server] is this ecclesiastical monogram



Can you identify these coats of arms?"

Trapani is a port at the western end of Sicily and I was in Florence. So I wrote to the parish priest of the church, who passed my letter to a local historian, who wrote that the ancient Church of San Francesco, which had been built on the site of the present church, had been founded in 1228 by the Patriarch Beato Angelo da Riati, an immediate disciple of Saint Francis, and that the patron of the chapel which contained the statue of the Virgin was the Staiti family of Trapani which had had the chapel constructed. The secular coat of arms was easily identified as that of the Staiti family, so that part of my friend's question was quickly answered. Not so easy to solve was the other part of the problem. But I put my brains to work and recalled that

the two-armed cross indicated a patriarch, that the letters in the monogram were those of his name, and that, in the thirteenth century, the name would be in Latin and not Italian. Having reasoned thus, the rest was easy. For in the monogram we see a gothic A with a loop at the end, which in the abbreviated writing already referred to stood for "us." Hence this letter meant Angelus. Likewise, the B stood for Beatus, and the clearly defined R with an E on its tail meant Reate, the Latin form of the modern Riati. Thus the problem was solved. The Staiti family, sponsors of the chapel, had given the statue of the Virgin in honor of the founder of the old Church of San Francesco, the Patriarch Beatus Angelus de Reate, the Latin for Beato Angelo da Riati.

## HOW TO USE HERALDRY IN RELATION TO ART

Now I COME to the means employed to date the marriages and births indicated by the coats of arms on the marriage chest, birth salvers, etc., referred to above. There is much material which gives the necessary clues to identify the arms, but searching them involves much drudgery. This material consists in part of the *Carte Dei e Pucci* already mentioned, but as the family trees, which as compiled by these genealogists do not begin to cover all the ground, the best and quickest way to begin the search is to consult a *Priorista*, so called because it contains all the colored coats of arms of every Florentine family which could boast of an elected Prior (the office of Prior corresponds more or less with our Alderman). In the seventeenth century particularly, and early in the eighteenth, many men as a hobby compiled these

Prioristi, and even in the sixteenth century we find collections or compilations of the same kind. There are many of these in the Florentine Archives, and books of colored coats of arms are to be found in the archives and libraries of other Italian cities. But, so far as I know, this useful hobby was primarily a Florentine one. Many requests I used to receive from Professor Marquand and my brother, Dr. Frank J. Mather, Jr., to date marriages, births, etc., from the sketches of coats of arms which they sent to me, showing the heraldic tinctures, argent, gules, sable, azure, vert, and proper (meaning natural color, as in the case of a hand). My first procedure was to take the sketches to the Florentine Archives, get out the best Priorista, and, starting with the husband's coat, turn over the pages of the Priorista until I found the family whose arms tallied in every way with the sketch. But this was not enough. Sometimes several families

had the same arms, so that a complete search of the Priorista had to be made. At times it turned out that any one of two or even three families might have been the family of the groom. The same procedure was then followed to identify the family of the bride indicated by her arms. And here again two or three families sometimes had to be taken into consideration. For a birth date, the Baptismal Books had to be gone through (after the date of the parents' marriage had been ascertained) until the record was found.

As to the marriages, having listed all the possible families for the groom and bride, I would get out the Ancisa, which I shall describe at length in the next section, and go through all the records of the families in question until I got the right bride married to the right groom and the year in which they were united. This branch of art research is highly interesting and rewarding. Practically all of the problems sent to me were solved if

the marriage or birth took place in Florence.\*

## AN INVALUABLE AID TO THE SEARCHER

COPIES OF OLD FLORENTINE CIVIC RECORDS: I have referred in a previous section to the worthy custom of copying old records — records later lost or destroyed — by Archivists who dealt mostly with art. There were several of these in the seventeenth century, one of the most important being del Migliore, of whom mention has been made. But the giant of them all was Piero d' Antonio dell'

\* It was through the method above described that I was able to give my brother the information which was the final supporting evidence that a small panel, figuring St. Jerome in the desert, which he had bought in this country, was painted by Masaccio. It had marriage coats of arms on it. I identified the families represented and found that the marriage took place in the year 1426. The painting may have been a marriage gift to an altar.

Ancisa. This remarkable man left behind him, in my opinion, the most comprehensive, useful, and superb monument to his zeal, patience, and industry ever left by any archivist. His work seems to have been a hobby or pastime. But what a pastime! Students of genealogy, history, art, and heraldry may well bow their heads in admiring and grateful tribute to this man. The bulk of Ancisa's work consists of about twenty-five thick — very thick — tomes containing accurate copies of items which appeared in the Gabella, the Civic Tax Office, which was distinct from the Catasto or Real Estate Office. These copies of records start in the early part of the fourteenth century and of necessity, end in the seventeenth century, when Ancisa could no longer carry on what had already been a life's work. The original Gabella records are no longer in existence, but, thanks to Ancisa, most of their contents between the dates above mentioned have



been preserved by Ancisa's copies. The information given is a detailed card index of all that he copied from the Gabella and it was done with the most meticulous accuracy. Every item copied was accompanied by a notation giving the letter of the codex together with the page number and line number. If the originals of the Gabella existed today, a consultation of the Ancisa copies would at once lead the archivist to the exact codex, the exact page, and the exact number of the line on that page where the item appeared. It is a titanic and amazing record of copying at its best. Furthermore, all these items referring to all the Florentine families which could qualify for the office of Prior are placed under the names of the families to which they refer. Among other items copied were the dates when a member of the family concerned was admitted to one of the Guilds and the year when any member of the family was married, with the names of the bride and

groom in full. Also, in many cases, we find the year given when a member of the family drew his will. This is enough to emphasize the inestimable value of Ancisa's work to the historian, the genealogist, and also the archivist interested in art.

And there is more. Ancisa mixed in with these copies of items in the Gabella a great many skeletons of family trees and numerous sketches of Florentine coats of arms, naming the family whose coat it was, showing clearly the heraldic emblems, and noting the heraldic color of each emblem.

But even this is not all. Ancisa left about twenty more volumes, many of them containing the names of members admitted to many of the Guilds from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, placing the names in alphabetical order and noting the year when each matriculated and his parish. In addition to this, these tomes contain other highly valuable

copies from originals to which no reference need be made. The writer cannot emphasize too strongly that all Ancisa did as an archivist was done in the grand style. His work will always remain as a great and worthy monument to a great and worthy archivist.

**MISERICORDIA RECORDS:** The genealogist and historian will find a limited field for search here. The records show visits to the homes of Florentine citizens, and are particularly valuable during the time of the Black Plague, since they may help to determine the probable dates of death when the Books of the Dead do not show them.

## MY WORK IN A PRINCE'S LIBRARY

**PRIVATE ARCHIVES:** The only field of this kind which I have searched is the archives of Prince Chigi, by special per-

mission from him. They were kept in the attractive library on the top floor of Palazzo Chigi on Piazza Colonna in Rome, and when this palace was bought by the Government to house the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Chigi archives were transferred to the Biblioteca Casanetensis in Rome, where, so far as I know, they still are. My search in the Chigi archives produced a most interesting document. In 1515, Andrea della Robbia's name (he was then seventy years old) was proposed for the second highest office in Florence, that of Prior. The record showed that Andrea was not elected (another citizen was), but the scribe who wrote the item felt, in fairness to Andrea, that he should make this statement about him: "Having been admonished in 1498 was proof that he had the status and was fit for the office." To understand just what this means, we must review a little of Florentine history relating to the intrepid reformer and

martyr, Savonarola. In 1497 Andrea and a large number of other Florentines signed a letter, which they sent to the Borgia Pope, Alexander VI, endorsing the preaching of Savonarola and urging that he be allowed to continue it. In May, 1498, the Convent of San Marco was entered by the authorities, and after a vigorous resistance by his supporters, Savonarola was taken to the Bargello, where he was imprisoned. He was put on trial and condemned and, on the 23rd of that month, was burned to death in Piazza Signoria. On June 19th, 1498, all of the citizens — including Andrea — who had signed the letter sent to the Borgia Pope in 1497, and all others who had tried to prevent the arrest of Savonarola, were admonished.<sup>36</sup> Being admonished in those days meant that the citizen could not be elected to any civic office for two years.

The trial and martyrdom of Fra Girolamo Savonarola made a tremendous

impression on Florence. In 1515, a Medici was chosen for the high office of Pope and assumed the title of Leo X. In that year he made a visit with great pomp to Florence, his native city. It is evident, in view of the visit of a newly elected Florentine Pope to Florence, that it might have caused serious trouble in that city if anyone who had been admonished by a predecessor of Leo X because of his marked partisanship for Savonarola — even if, technically, the ban was only effective until 1500 — were elected to be Prior, the second highest honor which Florence could bestow on him. Hence, in 1515, Andrea della Robbia was not elected, but, as the document quoted above stated, he could meet all the requirements for the office of Prior. For it goes without saying that there was no punishment in temporarily disqualifying a citizen from a civic office unless he could qualify for it in every way.

It is not generally known how inti-

mately Andrea and his family were associated with Savonarola. Because of his firm belief in Fra Girolamo, he gave him his wholehearted and unfailing support, for which, as we have seen, he was barred by the Borgia Pope from holding office in the city for two years. This ban, as shown, also deprived him of being elected a Prior in 1515, and although he did not die until 1525, he never held any civic office. But this is not all. Two of his sons,<sup>37</sup> Francesco in 1495 and Marco in 1496, became Frate Ambrogio and Frate Mattia respectively, after receiving the habit from Savonarola himself, in the latter's own Convent of San Marco. Also two daughters,<sup>37</sup> Caterina in 1496 and Margherita in 1502, became Suor Speranza and Suor Agnolina respectively in the suppressed Dominican Monasterio di Santa Lucia. Also, another son, Luca, seems to have been a Dominican of the Third Order. All of these four sons, with another, Paolo, a soldier, were in San

Marco when Savonarola was taken by force to be put on trial and two of them definitely (the lay sons) did all they could to prevent Fra Girolamo from being taken by the authorities. The world is fortunate in having an eyewitness and graphic account of what happened in San Marco on that occasion in the deposition in his own handwriting made by Luca, Andrea's son, at the famous trial.

## ADVENTURES OF AN AMATEUR GENEALOGIST IN ENGLAND

**BRITISH ARCHIVES:** The writer has done much genealogical searching in London and other archives and has searched a number of unpublished Parish Registers in and outside London. In London, his searches have been in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum, in the Record Office, and at Somerset House,



where the registers of births and copies of wills are kept. And here a word of warning to the genealogist. All of the earlier wills are in Latin, so the student must know Latin and paleography to be able to decipher them. All wills are carefully indexed in alphabetical order under the name of the testator. Hence, it is not difficult to find a will, unless it was filed in some office outside of London; and if found and the genealogist cannot read it, if it was written in Latin, he will find plenty of paleographers in the Study Room who will copy it for a consideration.

Tracing marriages in England is a long and tedious matter unless one knows definitely in what parish the bride lived. In that event, the Parish Register, if it exists, will give the required information. If he does not know the parish, he will find a number of Parish Registers in print and many more in typescript which may solve his problem. If search here results

negatively, there is nothing to be done but consult books of licences for marriages in London or outside. If that fails, the only thing which can be done is to get, if possible, a clue to the shire in which the bride lived and, if fortunate, another clue which will lead to a small section of it, then visit every parish church in that section and search the registers blindly. This will cost the genealogist from two shillings and sixpence to a guinea depending on the length of the search; and, if he finds the marriage, a certified copy by the Rector or Vicar will cost two shillings and sixpence.

To emphasize the value of a clue, the experience of the writer may be useful. He once followed a clue which led him to the unpublished Register of St. James, Piccadilly, where he achieved a master stroke in genealogical research by finding an important birth. Fortunately, he has a certified copy of the birth entry, for German bombardment wrecked St.

James and, it may well be, the Register. How this baptism was found may be of interest as showing how the archivist must work. Family tradition had led the writer, in all probability, to the parents of the child. A long search was made through many records but without success. He had virtually abandoned the search, for he felt that he had carefully followed up every clue and seemed unable to find any more. The father of the child was the Rev. Richard West, D.D., a prominent cleric in the Church of England in the early part of the eighteenth century. The writer told his wife that he had exhausted all possible clues and that it looked as if he would have to abandon the search. She suggested that perhaps Richard West had written some books, in which case they would be found in the British Museum Library. So he went at once to the Library and found three published sermons of the Rev. Richard West. On the title page of one

he was described as "Preacher at the Chapel on Golden Hill." He found that the chapel was no longer functioning but that it had been a dependency of the nearby Church of St. James, Piccadilly. An inspiration sent him to the Parish Register of that church and, after a short search, the baptismal entry of the child, whom he had so long and so unsuccessfully hunted for, jumped off the page at him and the name, John, was right. For the first son of the three succeeding generations was baptized John. This is one way the archivist pursues his hobby until he reaches his goal.

Highly unfortunate is the gencalogist whose clue may lead him to the Fleet Registers, which were kept by priests (many of them rascals) who were imprisoned in the Fleet for non-payment of debts and who married any couple, without any questions or scruples, who would pay the fee. Sometimes runaway marriages of couples in the highest society

took place in the Fleet. There are hundreds of these registers at Somerset House, some with indexes and some without. It costs one shilling and sixpence to consult each register and, even if the genealogist decides to pay to search them all, he may not find what he wants, for it is known that some of them have disappeared. The writer hunted in vain to find a particular register which promised to give him what he sought. As the information which he had obtained stated that it contained obscene marginal notes in Greek on the margin of various marriage entries, it is probably in the hands of a collector of rare books if it exists at all. In any event, it is not at Somerset House. But in spite of this failure the writer attained distinction at Somerset House, for he found another marriage, which he sought, and was told by the Clerks that he was the only genealogist who, so far as they knew, had ever found any sought-for marriage entry in a Fleet Register.

To read in the Library and search in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum and work at the Record Office and Somerset House the genealogist will need a letter of introduction (easily secured) from his Ambassador. Once he has access to these offices, he will find only courtesy and helpfulness on the part of those in charge of the Study Rooms there.



## L'ENVOI

IT IS THE WRITER'S hope that this book has shown the need for Archive Research to enhance our knowledge of art, history, biography, genealogy, and heraldry as it relates to Art, and has given an informative idea of the methods which must be followed in searching and the treasure which searching yields. He hopes it may appeal not only to the student but to all of the general public which may be interested in the subjects mentioned. He, furthermore, trusts that he may have succeeded so well in presenting his argument that the public will encourage Archive Research and students will be persuaded to pursue it.

The closing part of this book is addressed to the prospective Archivist: If you take up Archive Research, you will

find it most fascinating work. It calls for the zeal of the sleuth as well as your imagination to discover clues for your search. These must be followed, and, if they yield nothing, new clues must be discovered. If all the clues are carefully followed and lead into a blind alley, you may have to make a blind search which may lead you finally to the treasure. The writer has, for a long time, pursued such a hunt in the hope of finding a document which, if found, will once for all decide the authorship of certain frescoes which had one of the most revolutionary effects on painting ever achieved by an artist. This blind search has meant that he has gone through a four-year period of the writings of well over a hundred Florentine notaries, that is, a search of 400 years, and the treasure which he has been seeking has not yet been found. But there are still more notarial writings, for this four-year period, to be gone through. If he ever returns to Florence, he will



search there and, since as he writes he has thought of a possible clue which has hitherto escaped his notice, his patience may be rewarded by finding the document which he has sought for so long without success.

And now a few more words to you who will, I hope, become an Archivist. This kind of work will call for the best which you can give to it of eye, brain, and, above all, patience — and more patience and unfailing persistency. If these betray you, you may fail to note the documentary treasure which your tired eyes and brain have unwittingly passed over. But if, on the other hand, they stand the test and have kept unceasingly on the alert, that peculiar thrill which comes to the archeologist will come to you — that indescribable thrill which comes to anyone who suddenly realizes that he has discovered, and will bring to light so that all may see it, valuable treasure which has been buried for centuries.

## NOTES

THESE are primarily for the benefit of the students who may be planning to take up Archive Research. Those who will specialize in Art should read (in addition to the magazine articles referred to below) all of the writer's documents, "Nuovi Documenti Robbiani," which appeared in three series in *L'Arte* XXI (1918) and *L'Arte* XXII (1919), also all the documents (mostly the writer's) in Professor Marquand's monographs, *Luca della Robbia*, *Andrea della Robbia*, *Robbia Heraldry*, *Benedetto and Santi Buglioni*, and *The Sons of Andrea della Robbia*. The student who does this will fully understand the nature and yield of Art Research.

1. Allan Marquand, *Luca della Robbia* (Princeton University Press, 1914), p. 75.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

3. Allan Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia* (Princeton University Press, 1922), vol. I, p. xix.

4. Allan Marquand, *Giovanni della Robbia* (Princeton University Press, 1920), p. xvi.

5. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. I, p. xxi.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. xxxviii-liii.
7. Rufus Graves Mather, "New Documents on Michelozzo," *Art Bulletin*, vol. XXIV (1942), No. 3.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. I, p. 1.
10. Rufus Mather, "New Documents on Michelozzo," cited above.
11. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. I, p. 1.
12. Mather, "New Documents on Michelozzo."
13. *Ibid.*
14. Maud Crutwell, *Verrocchio* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), p. 236.
15. Rufus Graves Mather, "Donatello Debitore Oltre la Tomba," *Rivista d'Arte*, Anno XIX, N. 2, Aprile-Giugno 1937.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Rufus Graves Mather, "Nuovi Documenti Robbiani," Serie I, *L'Arte* XXII (1918), Fasc. I, p. 3.
18. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. II, p. 198; Mather, "Nuovi Documenti Robbiani," Serie I, *L'Arte* XXI (1918), Fasc. I, p. 4.
19. Allan Marquand, "Unpublished Documents Relating to the Ceppo Hospital at Pistoia," *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol. XXII (1918), p. 371; Mather, "Nuovi Documenti Robbiani," Serie I, cited above.
20. Mather, "Donatello Debitore," cited above.

21. Marquand, *Giovanni della Robbia*, p. 223.
22. Rufus Graves Mather, "Documents Relating to the Will of Luca della Robbia," *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol. XXIV (1920), p. 342.
23. Rufus Graves Mather, "Unpublished Documents Relating to the Will of Andrea della Robbia," *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol. XXIV (1920), p. 136.
24. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. I, p. lxi.
25. Marquand, *Giovanni della Robbia*, p. xxii.
26. What I have written from memory and in much abbreviated form is a summary of the two articles, published by the *American Journal of Archaeology* in 1920, relating to the Wills of Luca and Andrea della Robbia. I strongly urge the student to read both articles and pay here renewed tribute to the *American Journal of Archaeology* for having published the articles.
27. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. I, p. 92.
28. Mather, "New Documents on Michelozzo," cited above.
29. Marquand, *Giovanni della Robbia*, p. 173; Mather, "Nuovi Documenti Robbiani," *L'Arte* XXI (1918), Fasc. I, p. 18.
30. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. I, p. 20.
31. Rufus Graves Mather, "Nuovi Informazioni Relative alle Matricole di Giotto . . . ed altri Pittori nell' Arte dei Medici e Speciali di Firenze," *L'Arte* (n.s.) vol. VII (1936), Fasc. I, p. 50.

32. Rufus Graves Mather, "Il Primo Registro della Compagnia di San Luca," *L'Arte* (n.s.), vol. IX (1938), Fasc. IV, p. 351.
33. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. I, p. 53.
34. Allan Marquand, *Robbia Heraldry* (Princeton University Press, 1919), pp. 36 and 71.
35. Marquand, *Andrea della Robbia*, vol. II, p. 145.
36. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. xxv.
37. *Ibid.*, vol. I, Family Tree; Mather, "Nuovi Documenti Robbiani," Serie I, *L'Arte* (1918), Fasc. I, p. 4.



## PLATES

## PLATE I

Upper part of the Official Writ of Exile of Dante,  
dated March 10, 1302.

This is a fine example of abbreviated writing nearly at its best. The gist of the Writ is that the city officers listed (to the left, Dante is the eleventh) have been proved to be guilty of corruption in and out of office and opposing the administration. They are, therefore, condemned to exile and if they return to the Florentine "Fort" they "will be burned with fire until they die."

Ne Comptons plus sur nous-mêmes, mais sur Dieu seul.

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## PLATE II

(First published in *L'Arte*, 1936)

Matriculation in 1327 of Ambrogio Lorenzetti (sixth in the list, as "Ambrosius lorenzeni de senis") in the Guild of Physicians and Chemists. The transcription of the heading follows: "In dei nomine Amen Infrascripti sunt illi spetiari de Quibus supra fit mentio Qui tempore quam plurimum consolatum intravenerunt et venerunt ad collegium et scripti per me spigliatum dini notatum de mandatum consilium dicte artis."



## PLATE III

(Courtesy of the *Art Bulletin*)

Beginning of autograph tax return of Michelozzo in 1442. Observe the marginal note by the notary, "Intagliatore alle porti di sangiovanni."

1828 Augusto 1992

Amici miei sing. daq. v. finaly d. llo m.  
Luzione 2 ammettione d. llo m. u.

Amici d. llo m. d. llo m.  
Emotiv. d. llo m. d. llo m.

Amici d. llo m. d. llo m.  
Amici d. llo m. d. llo m.

Amici d. llo m. d. llo m.  
Amici d. llo m. d. llo m.

Amici d. llo m. d. llo m.  
Amici d. llo m. d. llo m.

PLATE IV

(First published in *Rivista d'Arte*, 1937)

Autograph tax return of Donatello in 1457.

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1. Time date no.  
 2. Time date no.  
 3. Time date no.

[illegible]

ti pua maua:  $\text{Shaping } f(x) = 2 \text{ pua pua } f(x) \text{ maua } f(x)$

Domato Sigurdto - 2.4.4.

உயர்நீதிமன்றம் தீர்மானம் செய்து கொடுத்திருக்கிறது.

*[Faint handwritten notes at the bottom of the page]*

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## PLATE V

(Courtesy of the *American Journal of Archaeology*)

Second page of notarial draft (note amendment by cancellation and additions) of the Will of Andrea della Robbia, dated Sept. 16, 1522. Three pages of this notary's draft for the testament and two pages drafted by him for the Codicil, dated Feb. 18, 1523, had to be transcribed. This kind of writing is about the worst the Archivist will have to grapple with (there are almost no arbitrary signs; many of the words merely have the first three or four letters and a line drawn to show that the word was truncated) but with patience and know-how it can be made to make sense. To prove this, here is the transcription of the brief human-interest second paragraph: "Item reliquit eidem Domine panna et strigum pro bruno faciendo per dictum testatorem" (Item he bequeaths to the same woman [his wife Donna Nannina] cloths and lining suitable for making mourning [garments] for the said testator).

Here is the beginning of the following paragraph: "In omnibus autem suis bonis heredes universales instituit fecit et esse voluit Johannem Lucam et Hieronimum suos filios legitimos et naturales equis portionibus et volens tollere scandala que solent sepi oriri in divisionibus bonorum <sup>et dividet datus</sup> <sub>A</sub>" (In all else of his possessions he institutes makes and wishes to be his universal [i.e., residuary] heirs Johannem [Giovanni] Lucam [Luca] and Hieronimum [Girolamo] his legitimate

*[The page contains several columns of handwritten text in cursive script, which is largely illegible due to extreme fading and blurring.]*



and natural sons in equal portions and wishing to avoid the scandals which are accustomed often to arise in the divisions of possessions <sup>and divides homes</sup>). Note "wishing to avoid," etc., and particularly that "and divides homes" was added to the original draft, not only to intensify the word immediately preceding but to remind his sons that he and his brother Simone had been alienated even to the grave, and to warn them not to create similar family disagreement as to his will and as to their own.



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